

COMMITTEE FOR THE NATION'S HEALTH, INC. F

2212 M Street, N.W.

Washington 7, D. C.

Tel.: EX 3-8156

*Com. for the
Nation's Health*

March 14, 1956

CHAIRMAN

Channing Frothingham, M.D.

HONORARY VICE-CHAIRMEN

George Meany
Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam
Walter P. Reuther
Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt
Gerard Swope

TREASURER

Henry Kaiser

SECRETARY

Walton Hamilton

CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Michael M. Davis

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Channing Frothingham, M.D.
Viola W. Bernard, M.D.
James A. Brownlow
Morris Llewellyn Cooke
Paul B. Cornely, M.D.
Nelson H. Cruikshank
Joseph Curran
Michael M. Davis
John W. Edelman
Katherine P. Ellickson
Abe Fortas
Frank F. Furstenberg, M.D.
Arthur Goldberg
Harry Goldblatt, M.D.
Bernard Greenberg
John Gunther
Walton Hamilton
Henry Kaiser
Mary Dublin Keyserling
John A. Lapp
David J. McDonald
Joseph C. Meyer, M.D.
Newbold Morris
James G. Patton
Eric Peterson
Jacob Potofsky
Samuel I. Rosenman
Theodore M. Sanders, M.D.
Max Seham, M.D.
Robert E. Sherwood
Boris Shishkin
Wayne Chatfield Taylor
Robert F. Wagner, Jr.
R. M. Walls, D.D.S.
Lester Washburn
Hubert Will
Wilson M. Wing, M.D.
Matthew Wolf

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John M. Brumm

Dear Mary:

I phoned you the last time I was in New York, finding from your secretary that you were just about to leave for the Southwest; so I didn't pursue you. I wanted to tell you about the closing of the Committee for the Nation's Health. I have been convinced for about two years that the Committee's activities should be terminated and that the time for action would be shortly after the merger of AFL and CIO had been consummated. We all believe that the Committee accomplished a good deal in national legislation relating to hospitals, research, public health and the care of persons on public assistance. Our advocacy of national health insurance helped in reducing opposition to these secondary measures. The main accomplishment however has been to put the idea of health insurance firmly on the administrative and political map. In this, the A.M.A. helped because its attack on "socialized medicine" had to be accompanied by advertisement of (voluntary) health insurance. And we coordinated AFL and CIO policies on health matters -- a task no longer necessary.

We did quite well financially in getting contributions from international and local unions, but it became evident that the Committee had become so identified with a specific legislative program that it was seriously handicapped in the necessary educational work with the general public and with organizations outside of labor; handicaps correspondingly in relation to legislation.

With the general acceptance of the health insurance principle, the need for education shifts to the question: What do we get for our health insurance money? It has become evident that the educational work in behalf of comprehensive medical services and group practice must be separated from legislative-lobbying activities. We worked over these policy questions at a two-day conference last summer, bringing in several outside experts.

The fresh start that is needed will involve both an educational organization and a separate legislative one.

The legislative work may center in AFL-CIO but must involve other organizations in coordination. A few of us are now getting our heads together to shape the lines of an organization to promote nationally the kind of comprehensive service and group practice with which you are familiar in H.I.P.; though the framework would vary from H.I.P.'s, depending on the size of community, the auspices, etc.

Personally, I do not intend to take active part in any more organizations, as I want to give myself primarily to writing. I have another book and several articles in prospect. I have agreed to work with others on the preliminary stages of a new organization for the purposes mentioned.

Your helpfulness in planning, financing and getting underway the Committee for the Nation's Health was a great service to a cause and to your humble servant. I'll never forget it. I hope to see you in New York after you return.

With warm regards,

Sincerely yours,


Michael M. Davis

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker
Chrysler Building
Lexington Avenue & 42nd Street
New York, New York